

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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1. a report on the activities of the Polish Ministry of Art and Culture among national minorities in Poland.

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**Activities of the
Polish Ministry of Art and Culture
Among National Minorities**

The following national groups exist in Poland: Germans, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Lithuanians, Slovaks, Czechs, and Gypsies.

Centers of non-Polish population are distributed in many voivodships. Bialystok, Wroclaw, and Koszalin voivodships have the most varied national groupings. The distribution of national groups is as follows:

The most numerous group is represented by the Ukrainians. At present the process of many people admitting Ukrainian nationality is still going on. According to unofficial data of the Ukrainian Society, there are over 200,000 Ukrainians in Poland. Statistical data of the past year stated that there were 121,000 Ukrainians. Their main concentrations are in Olsztyn, Koszalin, Wroclaw, Szczecin, and Zielona Gora voivodships, but they are scattered in smaller numbers throughout the country.

Another large group is represented by the Byelorussians who number about 136,150 persons. They live only in Bialystok Voivodship.

A third numerous group is the Germans, who number about 68,000 persons. This figure does not represent the actual number since there are many other Germans in Poland who were not registered as

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such in the 1952 census. The reason for this is the fact that in 1945-46, in fear of repression, many Germans claimed they were natives and received Polish documents.

Other nationalities of smaller numbers are:

Lithuanians, who number 6,166 persons. They are concentrated in the two powiats of Sejny and Suwalki (Bialystok). In Sejny, 48 per cent of the total population is Lithuanian.

Slovaks, who number 23,000 persons, concentrated in Nowy Targ Powiat.

Czechs, about 2,200 of them, concentrated on the border in Wroclaw Voivodship.

Gypsies, about 9,000, scattered throughout the country but mainly in Krakow, Katowice, Wroclaw, and Koszalin Voivodships.

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The policy of the people's government in relation to national groups can be divided into two stages. The first stage was from the liberation until 1955, and the second stage that of recent years.

The first stage is noted for its chauvinism which was the characteristic attitude of certain groups of society and also of the authorities toward people of non-Polish origin (especially

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Germans and Ukrainians). Occupation experiences were reflected often in the unfriendly attitude toward all Germans, including those remaining on Polish lands, and partially toward the Ukrainian nationality. Discrimination against people of non-Polish origin resulted from the lack of information about the Poles settling in the Recovered Territories, the lack of any propaganda explaining nationality problems, and the universally recognized indifferent or even hostile attitude of local authorities toward minorities.

Under these conditions in 1945-48, [] notice a significant popularization (sic) of the various national groups (especially Germans) which in comparison (sic) with information concerning the competition of the German Federal Republic created in those people a dislike for Poland and socialism. Large numbers of the Ukrainian intelligentsia renounced their nationality in order to avoid repression and investigation.

The errors and shortcomings of [] policy in relation to national groups were likewise reflected in cultural-instruction work. Up until 1955 there was not even one German or Ukrainian person employed in the cultural apparatus. This situation existed even in outposts of cultural dissemination in centers where the non-Polish people constituted a majority.

The first sign of change was the July 1950 decree of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the PZPR, which established concrete

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tasks for our Ministry in the field of work with national groups. On the basis of this decree several rules and recommendations were prepared for the people's councils for work with non-Polish populations. It should be stated that the provisions of this decree were disseminated mechanically and formally in the field, without the necessary control over execution and without actually preparing the cultural-instruction apparatus. The decree of the Political Bureau reviewed the tasks in many fields and could have become an important factor in rectifying the fate of the national groups. However, the resolutions were executed slowly in the ministry cultural-instruction offices and the Party did not control the fulfillment and the results.

This period, besides certain achievements, features the already mentioned mechanical solving and planning of work with national groups, as illustrated by the following:

1. Many reading rooms were opened in nationality centers; however, in spite of the number, their location left much to be desired. For example, in Olsztyn Voivodship, where there is a large collection of Ukrainian people, there were 1000 rural reading rooms but only 55 were located in the Ukrainian center.
2. Libraries were stocked with books in the German, Ukrainian, White Russian and Lithuanian languages, but their quantity as compared to the need was not

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sufficient. For example, in Koszalin Voivodship in 1955, Ukrainian books were purchased for a sum of 2,500 zloty, and German for the sum of 550 zloty. In Gorowo Flawieckie, Olsztyn Voivodship, where the Ukrainian population constitutes 36.4 per cent of the population, there were a total of 25,000 books in 9 public libraries and 36 library centers. However, there were only 25 titles in Ukrainian.

3. A small number of youth of non-Polish origin attended the art schools.
4. Theatrical performances, shows, as well as permanent and mobile cinemas in the non-Polish centers were very rare.
5. A positive achievement was the organization of a song and dance troupe in 1953 called "Freundschaft," whose task was to fulfill the cultural needs of the German people in Dolny Slask.

In 1955 this troupe gave 131 performances in 52 different places witnessed by 53,000 persons of German origin. The above figures indicate that the troupe is fulfilling its purpose and that it has created a great interest among the German people. During certain periods of its operation, the troupe had serious material and repertory worries.

The Central Committee decree of December 1955 forced

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☐ a more important interest in the problem of national groups.

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The Ministry of Culture and Art demanded of the directors of the instruction units an accounting of their present operations and the establishment of conditions for future work. In March 1955 a Collegium of the Ministry was established for this purpose. Materials and discussions brought forth all the above-mentioned errors and bared the true situation of national groups, as well as the unpreparedness of the cultural-instruction mechanism and the stations for actual work with non-Polish populations.

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The second stage was the process of remedying the ^errors and injustices of the past era. In the beginning this work was of a formal and mechanical nature. Orders and regulations were issued but there was no control over their execution. It was only since the middle of 1956 that operations were revived. This was due in large measure to:

--The creation of social-cultural societies (Ukrainian and recently Lithuanian)

--Financial assistance

The Presidium decree No. 260 of 2 June 1956, had an especially important significance for the development of national culture among non-Polish peoples, provided credits in the sum of 2,300,000 zloty

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(Enclosure No. 1), which were allotted to the Ministry of Culture for operations among both Polish and non-Polish people.

The above allotment was used by the people's councils for:

- Instructors for amateur clubs
- Organization of shows and literary evenings
- Purchase of books for libraries in non-Polish centers.
- Awards for outstanding work
- Equipping reading rooms and homes of culture located in non-Polish centers.
- Purchase of fuel and the repair of social reading rooms located in non-Polish centers
- Stipends for youths studying in art schools
- Purchase of instruments for schools and musical centers as well as equipment for dormitories of art schools in which there are youths of non-Polish origin

In preparing the budget for 1957 the Ministry of Culture provided funds for work among national groups, however the Ministry of Finance rejected the funds (sic).

In December of the past year the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Internal Affairs reached an agreement and together both prepared a budgetary proposal for the year 1957, which was presented as an annex and was accepted by the Ministry of Finance. (Enclosure No. 2).

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The Ministry, after an evaluation of the work of the past years set as its most important task:

- Concentrating attention on the systematic and current study of the field, as concerns the cultural needs of the various national groups as well as planning their satisfaction.
- Working and cooperating with the cultural social societies of national groups in developing their national cultures
- Accepting every just proposal tending to develop the national culture of national groups in the country
- Insuring and organizing a repertory in the native tongue for amateur troupes of non-Polish origin
- Organizing instruction in the form of course study and seminar schooling for cultural-instruction workers in the national groups

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The Ministry is trying to fulfill the recommended proposals within the limits of financial possibility, and already has some positive achievements.

In an effort to realize the proposals, the Ministry has prepared people's council cultural -instruction workers for work in this field. Nationality problems have been discussed at:

- The meeting of chiefs of the presidium cultural departments

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for the voivodship people's councils.

--Training seminars of organizational chiefs and instructors of dissemination departments.

The coordination and supervision of the cultural instruction complex among national groups has been entrusted to the organizational instructors of the disseminating departments.

About the middle of 1956, regional 2-day seminars were held for chiefs of the cultural departments of the presidium of powiat people's councils and the chiefs of district libraries working with national groups. Special emphasis was placed on the problem of people of German, Ukrainian, White Russian, and Lithuanian descent.

At these seminars discussions were held concerning the following:

- Polish national policy with regard to national groups.
- The role and the tasks of the people's council cultural instruction workers and cultural activists in their work with national groups. Placing great emphasis on creating a cordial atmosphere around the people of non-Polish descent and a sincere model of mutual relationship between the Polish people and the members of national groups. Accepting the initiatives put forth by national groups with respect to preserving their natural culture and satisfying their cultural needs.
- The problem of publications for national groups.

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--The problem of a repertory for artistic groups and the source of supply.

To a great extent the seminars fulfilled their purpose. The social instruction workers were instructed in nationality matters, and the work with this population was reflected in the planned tasks of the various departments.

An example of the inclusion of the national groups in the stream of culture was the actual participation of (their) cultural instruction workers in the National Meeting in Warsaw on 20 and 21 November 1956, and their participation in numerous voivodship and district meetings.

Realization of the recommendations plus financial aid have already yielded certain positive results in this work, such as:

1. An improvement in the distribution of cultural instruction units thereby equalizing the numerical disproportion between units in Polish centers and other national centers.
2. The purchase of books printed in other native languages has been increased.
3. Attention has been given to those youths wishing to study in art schools.
4. A foreign cultural exchange has been initiated between the German Democratic Republic, the White Russian Republic, the Ukrainian Republic and the Czech Republic.

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5. The number of theatrical performances has been increased in non-Polish centers, frequently with the participation of foreign guests from countries representing the same nationality.
6. Repertories have been supplied to amateur groups in their native tongues.

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The aid of the Ministry to various national groups is as follows:

German Group

Due to the good organization of the social life of the German people, they have, with the modest help of the cultural instruction mechanism, eagerly and quickly assembled around the cultural instruction work. The greatest problem in the cultural instruction work is the lack of a good repertory (for a stage group). Until recently the pre-war repertory was played.

The Ministry has entered into direct contact with the Central Home of the People's Art in Leipzig and by way of exchange is receiving the various repertory material. However, this source is not in a position to satisfy present needs. The troupe most desires a stage repertory, that is why the Ministry of Culture and Art after receiving this material from Leipzig had 26 (plays) printed and distributed as one collection. This has satisfied the needs of the area to a great extent; however, the supply of new repertories in greater quantities is a consistent need.

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The German centers also received 170 copies of a complete musical score which the Ministry received from Leipzig. A festival of German amateur troupes took place during the past year in Wroclaw, Koszalin, Szczecin and Zielona Gora Voivodships, which are inhabited by German populations. The central eliminations took place in Koszalin with the participation of 330 members of the troupes. This festival showed the achievement of the German amateur movement in Poland. Some troupes showed a fairly high artistic level and a well chosen repertory. As of the 1st of January of this year the Ministry of Culture and Art accepted a House of Culture in Szczecin in the name of Polish-German Friendship from the trade unions which will be the center for instructional work for the German population in Poland.

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Ukrainian Group

The Ukrainian population is the most numerous and most dispersed in Poland. During a period of the policy marked by nationalism and chauvinism, this population suffered the most injustice. That is why help from the Ministry for this people is the greatest. Satisfying the cultural needs of the dispersed Ukrainian people posed many difficulties. The Ministry eagerly received the proposal for a Ukrainian Social-Cultural Society because this institution afforded an opportunity to reach Ukrainians throughout the country.

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At present the Society is occupied with organization and in choosing a repertory. The Ukrainian Society and the Ministry of Culture and Art initiated a festival of Ukrainian amateur troupes in the recent Month for Strengthening Polish-Soviet Friendship (in the Ukrainian decade). The festival covered a wide range. In the Ukrainian centers many local competitions were held, with the Koszalin, Wroclaw and Wlodawa Lublinska troupes distinguishing themselves. Central eliminations were planned but at the last moment they were called off and were not held. This was due to a lack of funds which the TPPR (Polish-Soviet Friendship Society) was obliged to supply.

The Ministry, with the cooperation of the Society, held a 34-day course for Ukrainian cultural instruction activists. There were 55 persons present at this course. The cultural instruction activists were full of appreciation to the Ministry for giving them the opportunity of organizing a course in the Ukrainian language.

Byelorussian Group

The Byelorussian Social-Cultural Society, with the exception of the Jewish, is the oldest of all the national societies in Poland. This society already has a certain tradition of cultural instruction work. At present the Ministry is carrying on negotiations

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with the Society on the problem of training the Byelorussian cultural instruction activists.

Lithuanian Group

In 1956 a Lithuanian Home of Culture was created in Pinsk as a center for disseminating Lithuanian national culture. In the beginning it had trouble in setting up normal operations; however, with the passing of time the work began to develop in a better manner. Presently, the Home of Culture already has some definite achievements. There are still difficulties in acquiring a repertory in the Lithuanian language. The materials from the TPR are already old and the troupes are reluctant to use them. The Home of the People's Art in Moscow has promised us help in this matter, but up until now we have not received anything.

About the end of last year a Lithuanian Social-Cultural Society was created with which the Ministry is in contact. It is expected that it will be easier to acquire material for the Lithuanian troupes through the Society. The approaching decade of Lithuanian culture in the Month of Strengthening Polish-Soviet Friendship, June, will serve to enliven the activities of many artistic troupes and the contacts between the Polish and Lithuanian people. Plans are being made for a broad cultural exchange with the Lithuanian Soviet Republic, which will also influence the activization of the cultural instruction movement.

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The Czech and Slovak populations are more concentrated, that is why work with them is less difficult.

The Cultural Departments and Sections of the presidiums of the powiat and voivodship people's councils have established direct contact with their counter parts in Czechoslovakia. In this way they are carrying on an exchange of repertories, books and material for cultural instruction work. Together they are organizing evening cultural meetings, competitions between various troupes, sightseeing trips, etc.

The most difficult work is with the gypsy group, because it still carries on a nomadic way of life. Several times the Gypsies have turned to the Ministry for material help, but the plans they submitted did not guarantee cultural instruction work and the proper use of financial resources. At the end of last year the Ministry helped in opening reading rooms for gypsies settled in Katowice.

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In its plans the Ministry is aiming at the further realization of the above mentioned recommendations by:

- Cooperation with the social-cultural societies of the national groups promoting cultural development.
- Giving as much aid as possible through the peoples' councils to those groups which do not have their own societies.

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--Giving due consideration to the initiative of the national groups in contributing to the development of their national culture.

--Training the cultural instruction groups of the people's councils in the field of work with national groups.

--Giving aid to the national councils in training cultural instruction activists of the national groups, giving courses, educational seminars.

--Giving aid in the organization and selection of repertories in the native tongue for national amateur troupes.

The Ministry of Culture and Art is considering creation of a German social-cultural society.

Practice has shown that the cultural needs of national groups are better satisfied where there are such cultural societies in their midst.

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Enclosure No. 1

Resolution of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers directed
the distribution of funds among the following voivodships:

Olsztyn	500,000	zloty
Koszalin	300,000	"
Opole	600,000	"
Wroclaw	200,000	"
Gdansk	200,000	"
Szczecin	100,000	"
Katowice	400,000	"

The Ministry announced a correction in the resolution, proposing consideration in the distribution of funds for such voivodships as Bialystok, Zielona Gora, and Lublin, where national groups also appear. For reasons not immediately known to us, the proposals of the Ministry were not taken into consideration by the Presidium of the Council of Ministers.

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The budget for 1957 totals 3,159,110 zlotyincluding 2,700,000 zloty -- for operating costs

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459,110 zloty -- for personnel expenses

Division of these allotments for the various voivodships appears as follows:

<u>Voivodships</u>	<u>Operating Costs</u>	<u>Personnel Expenses</u>	<u>Total</u>
Bialystok	272,963.	148,110.	421,073.
Gdansk	62,500.	---	62,500.
Koszalin	290,000.	90,000.	380,000.
Katowice	360,000.	30,000.	390,000.
Lublin	74,000.	14,000.	88,400.
Olsztyn	545,000.	25,000.	570,000.
Opole	600,000.	70,000.	670,000.
Rzeszow	91,000.	---	91,000.
Szczecin	200,000.	77,600.	277,600.
Wroclaw	150,000.	40,000.	190,000.
Zielona Gora	54,537.	---	54,537.
	<u>2,700,000.</u>	<u>459,110.</u>	<u>3,159,110.</u>

This budget was prepared on the basis of materials sent by the Departments of Culture of the presidiums of voivodship people's councils.

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Enclosure No. 3

Number of Schools in which Teaching is done in a Non-Polish Language

Year 1956-57

<u>Language of Teaching</u>	<u>Elementary School</u>		<u>Elementary and Lyceum</u>		<u>Pedagogical Lyceum</u>		<u>Total</u>		<u>No. of Teachers</u>
	<u>No. of Schools</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>	<u>No. of Schools</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>	<u>No. of Schools</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>	<u>No. of Schools</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>	
Byelorussian	52	3712	2	586	2	224	56	4522	201
Slovak	29	1779	1	314	-	---	30	2093	92
Czech	1	26	-	---	-	---	1	26	3
German	124	4877	2	130	1	70	127	5077	268
Jewish	5	1286	2	968	-	---	7	2254	62
Lithuanian	4	118	1	104	-	---	5	222	15
Ukrainian	<u>2</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	217	11,854	8	2102	3	294	228	14,250	643

Note: The total of elementary schools does not include the elementary classes in 11-year schools.

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Number of Schools where the Native Language is Taught as a Subject

Year 1956-57

As of 1 March 1957

<u>Language</u>	<u>Elementary School</u>		<u>Elementary and Lyceum</u>		<u>Pedagogical Lyceum</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>No. of Schools</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>	<u>No. of Schools</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>	<u>No. of Schools</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>	<u>No. of Schools</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>
Byelorussian	118	6432	-	-	-	-	118	6432
Slovak	3	41	-	-	-	-	3	41
Czech	-	----	-	-	-	-	---	-----
German	4	54	-	-	-	-	4	54
Jewish	4	88	-	-	-	-	3	88
Lithuanian	15	254	1	12	-	-	16	266
Ukrainian	<u>137</u>	<u>2431</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>108</u>	<u>141</u>	<u>2590</u>
Total	280	9300	2	63	3	108	285	9471

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